

Useful Resources

- You will find a useful list of links to websites to visit on the Diocesan Website atwhich may help your thinking, particularly about your mission, mission statement, exploring and formulating your vision and lots of practical ideas.
- The Care for the Family organisation produces a Good Practice Guide for parent and toddler group and practical ideas for those starting up a faith based adults, babies and children's group.



- The Mothers Union produces an excellent list of what makes a good group.

- Scripture Union produces a free downloadable training resource called 'Building Blocks' as well as many session resources in their Tiddlywinks range for leaders of groups of under fives.



make them count

National Strategy for Christian Toddler Groups

- '1277' is an online ecumenical under fives support network for church groups and can be found on Facebook and have their own website.
- 'Top Tips on Worshipping with under-5s: practical pointers for anyone working with children' Alison Dayer published Scripture Union 2011—a booklet big on practical advice, but small enough to digest over a cup of coffee!
- 'Pretty much everything you need to know about working with under 5s' Judith Wigley published Scripture Union 2009

Some session resources are available on loan from Church House.

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Parish Resources:
Children & Young People



Where to start

It's always best to start by thinking about why you want to do something and what you want to achieve.

Then look at what is available locally. Where are the gaps in provision?

- Talk to carers/parents at the local playgroup/other Under Fives provision or school to find out what their needs are and when would be the best time to run a group.
- Decide on a suitable warm safe venue with toilets, baby changing facilities, do a risk assessment.
- Decide who is available to help/run/co-ordinate/staff the session? Who needs a DBS check?
- Are there any training needs? A FREE downloadable training resource is available from Scripture Union called Building Blocks:
[http://www.scriptureunion.org.uk/Uploads/Documents/Building%20Blocks%20Training%20Resource\(2\).pdf](http://www.scriptureunion.org.uk/Uploads/Documents/Building%20Blocks%20Training%20Resource(2).pdf)
- Decide what resources you need to buy - toys, tables and chairs, equipment and explore sources of funding.
- Decide on frequency of provision, costs, charging, hospitality, activities.
- Think about what you are providing for parents and carers - opportunities for talking, coffee, educational opportunities, faith talk etc
- Think about communication - how are you going to keep in touch with those attending? Email, Facebook, Twitter, website page - ask what they prefer.
- Build on relationships formed through baptism - personally invite your baptism families to your launch.
- Use Christingle/Crib and other family friendly services to maintain contact.



Planning to work with families

Be Intentional. Make yourself a faith based group from the start.

Think all week. We are encouraged to 'Grow the Church' but that doesn't mean just Sundays. In today's society, Sundays are not always the best time for families.

Be Inclusive. Involve the whole family wherever possible.

Think Motivation. Is the intention/expectation to see families in church on Sunday or can their group be their church?

Be Prepared. Send activities & ideas that can be explored by the family at home after each session.

Think Church. If you are expecting families to join you in church on Sunday, what are you offering? What needs to change? How different is it from their group experience?

Be Flexible. If one family asks about Baptism explore the concept with the whole group. Could the baptism take place within Messy Church, Toddler Group?

Think Social. Arrange suitable opportunities for all the church groups to come together socially or in worship more than once a year!

